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ORIG: GACarver, Jr.

UNIT: DCI/SAVA

EXT: [REDACTED]

DATE: 8 May 1970

S E C R E T

CABLE SECRETARIAT DISSEMINATION

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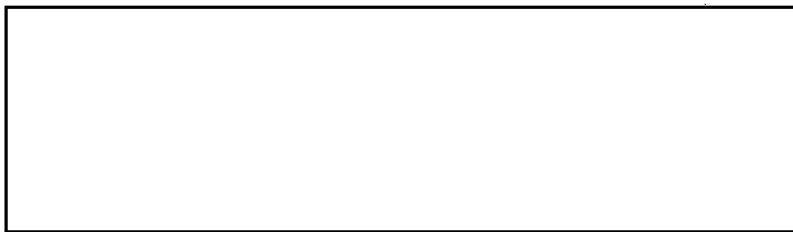
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S E C R E T

CITE DIRECTOR

TO PRIORITY SAIGON

00 23 510 MAY 70



1. YOUR PERCEPTIVE AND MOST HELPFUL [REDACTED] ARRIVED

JUST AS WE WERE DRAFTING THIS CABLE AND SHORTENED IT ^{Considerably} GREATLY, ⁵ SINCE REF ANSWERED MANY OF THE QUESTIONS WE WERE ABOUT TO ASK.

2. ONE POINT PERHAPS IMPLICIT IN YOUR COMMENTS, BUT NOT SPELLED OUT, TROUBLES US HERE. THE THEME OF SOME CURRENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS (STRONGLY ATTACKING THE CONCEPT OF CAMBODIAN OPS THAT COULD AID THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT BECAUSE OF THE LATTER'S "ATROCITIES" AGAINST VIETNAMESE) SMELLS SUSPICIOUSLY OF COMMUNIST INSPIRATION. WE KNOW, LARGELY FROM YOUR REPORTS, THAT "CONTROL" OF THE STUDENT MOVEMENT SEEMS TO BE SLIPPING INTO PROGRESSIVELY MORE MILITANT HANDS.

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S E C R E T

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CITE DIRECTOR

IS THERE ANY HARD EVIDENCE OR EVEN PLAUSIBLE SUSPICION OF A VC HAND AT WORK HERE IN PICKING THEMES, CHOOSING ACTIONS OR DIRECTING KEY AGITATORS?

3. AS YOU POINT OUT, XXXX THIEU IS SOMEWHAT THE VICTIM OF BAD LUCK AS WELL AS MISMANAGEMENT OR POOR TACTICS. NONETHELESS, THE MIX OF CAUSES, ISSUES AND DISCONTENTS IS GETTING QUITE DISTURBINGLY VOLATILE. FURTHERMORE, IT SEEMS TO US *that* SOME OF THE SUPERFICIALLY SEPARATE ISSUES NOW LOOSE IN THE LAND ARE RECIPROCALLY REINFORCING. CORRUPTION AND INFLATION CONSTITUTE ONE EXAMPLE SET. THIEU'S LONG TERM POLITICAL STRATEGY (A SOUND ONE IN OUR VIEW) INVOLVES BUILDING A BASE CENTERED ON THE ARMY AND CIVIL SERVICE AND RESTING ON A DECENTRALIZED FOUNDATION OF QUASI-AUTONOMOUS VILLAGES. BUT THE SALARIED LOWER RANKS OF THE ~~XXXXXXX~~ MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVICE, THIEU'S PUTATIVE HOLE CARD, ARE AMONG THOSE MOST SQUEEZED BY INFLATION AND, BEING SO SQUEEZED, MOST

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CITE DIRECTOR

TO [THE CONTINUING SIGHT OF THEIR SUPERIORS RAKING IN ILLICIT PROFITS FROM CORRUPTION FAR EXCEEDING THE VERY FLEXIBLE LIMITS ACCEPTED AS NORMAL IN ASIAN SOCIETIES. IF THESE SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY JUMP THE RAILS IN THE SHORT TERM, THERE WILL NOT BE A LONG TERM.

4. HISTORICAL PARALLELS ARE ALWAYS DANGEROUS. THIEU IS NOT A DIEM AND HISTORY, ^(Seldom) IF EVER, REALLY REPEATS ITSELF. STILL, THERE ARE MANY ASPECTS OF THE CURRENT SCENE DIS-QUIETINGLY REMINISCENT OF 1962. IN THAT PERIOD THE VC, MILITARILY, WERE BACK ^{ed} TO THE WALL. HELICOPTERS, QUANTUM INCREASES IN U.S. SUPPORT AND CONCOMITANT IMPROVEMENTS IN ARVN FIREPOWER AND PERFORMANCE WERE PROVING VERY UNDIGESTIBLE MORSELS TO SWALLOW SIMULTANEOUSLY. THE VC WERE SAVED, ~~HOWEVER~~, AND GIVEN THEIR ESSENTIAL RESPITE BY DETERIORATION AND CRISES WITHIN THE NON-COMMUNIST POLITICAL SPECTRUM, CULMINATING IN DIEM'S NOVEMBER 1963 OVERTHROW AND THE EIGHTEEN MONTH SHAKEOUT

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CITE DIRECTOR

TO [BACK ON ITS POLITICAL FEET.

5. OUR IMMEDIATE TASK, HOWEVER, AND THE REASON FOR THIS CABLE, IS NOT TO EXCHANGE SPECULATIVE ANALYSIS BUT TO DEVELOP CONCRETE ACTION ~~RECOMMENDATIONS~~ RECOMMENDATIONS. WE ARE CURRENTLY IN THE THROES OF STITCHING TOGETHER AN OVERALL PAPER DEVELOPED FROM [] CORRESPONDENCE WITH WHICH ^{you} WE ARE FAMILIAR. WE WANT TO SUBMIT ON MONDAY (11 MAY) SOME SENSIBLE SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC STEPS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT COULD TAKE -- OVERTLY AND COVERTLY, THROUGH THE STATION, THE EMBASSY AND OTHER MISSION COMPONENTS, THE AMBASSADOR PRIVATELY, THE AMBASSADOR PUBLICLY, ETC., ETC., -- ~~XXX~~ TO AMELIORATE THE SAIGON POLITICAL CLIMATE AND ENCOURAGE (OR INDUCE) THIEU TO MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTIONS. YOUR SUGGESTIONS WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. UNFORTUNATELY, WE WILL NEED THEM BY OUR JOB ON MONDAY, 11 MAY. END OF MESSAGE

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